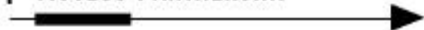


ATAP

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY
ACCESS PARTNERSHIP



ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998 ATA (S 2432)

“Providing access to assistive technology for individuals with disabilities was a simple promise in 1988. Today it is much, much more. This legislation represents a bridge to the next century for individuals with disabilities. Across that bridge lies increased independence, realized potential, new partnerships, unimagined challenges, and unlimited opportunities.”

Senator James M. Jeffords, VT

The Assistive Technology Act (ATA) of 1998 replaces the Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act (Tech Act). The ATA is the federal legislation which continues and expands the work of the states’ assistive technology projects to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages to live independently, work, participate fully in community and school, and make informed choices about all aspects of their life. The ATA will establish a National Public Internet Site for information about assistive technology resources.

Key state initiatives under the ATA to benefit individuals with disabilities of all ages are:

- public awareness programs about the availability & benefits of assistive technology;
- interagency coordination & policy development;
- outreach to assist individuals of all ages to access assistive technology;
- technical assistance and training related to access & use of assistive technology;
- protection & advocacy services to assist individuals.

Activities may also include:

- establishing alternative financing mechanisms to purchase assistive technology; and
- coordination of public, private, interstate and federal partnerships related to increasing access to assistive technology devices and services.

***Rhode Island’s U.S. Senator Jack F. Reed co-sponsored the
Assistive Technology Act of 1998.***

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Assistive Technology Access Partnership (ATAP) is a partnership of organizations and individuals dedicated to expanding the availability and access of assistive technology to Rhode Islanders with disabilities.

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U.S. Senator Jack Reed

Senator Jack Reed has demonstrated his commitment to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities through his support of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. In addition, Jack Reed has demonstrated leadership in education and health care issues. He is committed to health care reform and has supported efforts to improve access to health care coverage for all Americans, particularly the uninsured children of working families.

Jack Reed served 3 terms in the U.S. House of Representatives before being sworn in as Rhode Island's 47th U.S. Senator. As a member of the House of Representatives, and of the House Education and Labor Committee, he has made education one of his top priorities. He actively worked for passage of the GOALS 2000 Act and reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Senator Reed also serves on the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, and the Special Committee on Aging.

Before becoming a U.S. Congressman in 1991, Jack Reed served Rhode Island as a State Senator for 8 years. He graduated from Harvard Law School and worked for two law firms before taking public office.

Citizens of Rhode Island applaud Jack Reed for his support and personal interest in Rhode Island. The statement below by a mother captures the essence of our Rhode Island Senator's work on behalf of individuals with disabilities.

"As the mother of two sons who have disabilities which involve the support and use of assistive technology, I can personally attest to the support and personal interest that Senator Reed took in helping my own children and all citizens with disabilities in my town and in this state.... Not only was Congressman Reed showing an interest in these children and their families, but he was trying to ensure that services were available, and he was also concerned about state and Federal agencies responding to citizen's concerns in a timely manner."

Karen McGinley, parent and member of the Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee and State Rehabilitation Council, DHS/Office of Rehabilitation Services